ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS' IMPLEMENTATION OF CURRICULUM WITH ACTION-ORIENTED APPROACH IN TURKISH PRIMARY EDUCATION CLASSROOMS

By

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study is to explore English language teachers' implementation of a curriculum innovation with an action-oriented approach in the context of teaching English to very young learners in Turkish primary schools. As a part of exploratory case study design, data from multiple sources were gathered in the form of observational field notes, follow-up interviews and document analysis. Findings indicated a variation in teachers' instructional practices ranging from traditional to constructivist. Even if factors such as presence of instructional materials and facilities of the school influenced the implementation, this study indicated that the teacher is the main factor in effective delivery of any imposed change. Besides, the positive influence of proficiency in subject-matter knowledge and curricular knowledge to achieve coherence between the intended and delivered curriculum was revealed. The results showed that providing an ongoing support and including teachers in the process of curriculum development helped to promote the effective implementation of the curriculum innovation.

Keywords: Curriculum Implementation, Primary Education, Teaching English To Young Learners, Action-oriented Approach, Case Study.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Turkey has gained momentum since the introduction of a curriculum reform in 1997. This reform provided the integration of primary and secondary education into a single stream with a communicative-oriented curriculum and English as a compulsory subject was introduced in grades 4 and 5 (Kırkgoz, 2008a). In 2006, a new curriculum change was proposed with process-oriented approaches introducing the importance of learning situation and realizing how learning takes place in order to help the learners to gain the ability to manage their own learning which leads to learner autonomy (Ministry of National Education (MoNE) 2006).

Through this more recent change, the duration of compulsory education has been extended from 8 years to 12. Besides, the Turkish government has decided to lower the grade for the introduction of a foreign language in primary education in line with the well-known fact that 'earlier is better' in learning a second language. By this framework, Larson-Hall (2008) compared the Japanese students starting to learn the foreign language at the age of three with those of peers who began studying the foreign language at the age of twelve or thirteen and results revealed age effects for linguistic measures even in a situation of minimal exposure to a foreign language. Seen in this light, English is offered as a subject in second and third grades of primary schools for two lessons per week for the pupils at the age of 6 to 7.5 in Turkey since 2012. Therefore, the need for updating English as a foreign language curriculum of primary and secondary education emerged.

The revised curriculum adopted an action-oriented approach in line with the Common European Framework (CEFR). The approach described users and learners of a language primarily as 'social agents', i.e. members of

society who have tasks (not exclusively language-related) to accomplish in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action. Thus, it labeled learners as users of the language rather than students studying the language as the topic of instruction (MoNE, 2013).

Most of the research on English language curriculum in Turkey has focused on the perceptions and views of the teachers. Bayraktar (2014) researched teachers' views on the evaluation of second grade English curriculum and noted positive opinions of the teachers in general. Moreover, Yıldıran and Tanrıseven (2015) examined teachers' opinions on the second grade English curriculum in primary education and reported positive views of the teachers' considering the suitability of the program for the pupils.

1. Objective

The aim of this study is twofold: firstly, due to its exploratory nature, it aims to make a contribution to the development of implementation theories on educational change; secondly, it aims to provide a deeper understanding of the classroom implementation of the curriculum with an action-oriented approach. Briefly put, the present study aims to further explore how EFL teachers in primary schools in Turkey implement (or do not implement) the revised curriculum with an action-oriented approach designed for the young learners in the second and third grades.

2. Review of Literature

Research on curriculum implementation provides information on what is happening in the classroom as the 'black box' of any educational innovation (Fullan, 1997). Therefore, educational research has addressed teachers' use of curriculum from different perspectives such as curriculum studies (Kırkgöz, 2008a; Stockton, 2009; Wang & Cheng, 2005) and English language policy (Li, 2010; Wang, 2008).

With respect to curriculum studies, Kırkgöz (2008a) focused on public primary school English language teachers' implementation of the curriculum and reported instructional practices of the teachers' alternating along

transmissive and interpretive teaching. Stockton (2009) reported positive impact of close staff and community relationships on the collective implementation of the curriculum in small rural schools of New Zealand. Wang and Cheng (2005) identified the top-down approach to English language curriculum innovation as the main source of failure in the sustainability of the innovation.

As for language policy, Li (2010) examined the relation between national English language policy and its implementation and suggested involvement of the teachers into the policy making process. Wang (2008) explored practitioners' perceptions on language policy implementation in the Chinese context and reported inconsistency between policymakers' intentions and teachers' executions.

The gap between intended and implemented curriculum has been examined in many studies with different purposes. Orafi and Borg (2009) revealed mismatch between the objectives of the curriculum and the instruction observed in the Libyan secondary school context. Besides, Wang (2010) indicated a mismatch between EFL curriculum policy-makers' intentions and the administrators' perceptions on the implementation of the curriculum. The administrators emphasized only higher scores on national English examinations rather than helping students to gain proficiency in the language.

Few studies reported variety in the implementation of the same curriculum. Carless (2001) revealed differences in the implementation of Target-Oriented Curriculum (TOC) in lower primary English classrooms in Hong Kong. Similarly, Castro (2013) reported variety in teachers' understanding and adoption of the curriculum change process, even some may never adopt the demands of the proposed change regarding the implementation of new Communicative English Language Curriculum in Dominican Republic context.

Few studies emphasized the teacher aspect as the power to the effective implementation of the curriculum. El-Okda (2005) argued the inefficacy of top-down or bottom-up strategy on its own in designing a sustainable educational reform. Instead, the author proposed a model combining both strategies in curriculum

development supporting task-based teacher research as the tool to support top-down curricula development. In addition, Su (2006) noted the teacher as the determiner on the success of any reform to become meaningful at the local or school levels.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) proposed by Hord, Rutherford, Huling-Austin, and Hall (1987) formed the theoretical basis for the present study mainly due to its popularity in investigating participants' responses in 'top-down' situations such as curriculum innovation and policy implementation (Carless, 2001; Khoboli & O'toole, 2012). Anderson (1997) defined CBAM as descriptive and predictive rather than being prescriptive, so the model strived to understand attitudes and behaviors of the teachers in the course of practicing new classroom resources and ideas. In addition, fidelity and mutual adaptation approach proposed by Fullan and Pomfret (1977) was used to examine the teachers' implementation of the curricular change.

Considering the fidelity and mutual adaptation approach, fidelity refers to the teachers' implementation of the curricular change developed by the experts outside the classroom and mutual adaptation refers to the adaptations on the innovation during praxis made by the teachers as the users of the innovation (Fullan & Pomfret, 1977). This study adopted both research perspectives; in that, it aimed to explore how teachers implement the official curriculum proposed by the curriculum developers together with the way they adapted the curriculum during their actual practices in the classroom.

This study adopted 'levels of use' as the theoretical framework mainly because it was concerned with the teacher's behavior in different processes of implementation of the innovation named preparing to use, starting to use and gaining experience in performing the change in the classroom (Anderson, 1997). Defined in this way, Nonuse as 0 Level means that teacher does not have sufficient knowledge about the change, so he/she does not have any plans to practice the change. Level 1 as Orientation refers to the teacher's decision on searching for more information about the change, but still there is no decision on implementation. Level 2, Preparation indicates the teacher's active preparation to implement the change, yet still there is no classroom practice of the change. At level 3, Mechanical, implementation of the change is started, now the teacher is concerned with the logistics of implementation (e.g., classroom management, lesson planning) and acquiring new capabilities. This level of implementation is teacher-centered, since the teacher mainly pays attention to management and ease of use concerning the implementation. Routine use as Level 4A is observed when the teacher uses the change regularly by making few modifications and adaptations. However, Refinement as Level 4B is observed when the teacher evaluates the impact of the innovation on his/her students and as a result makes some changes on its usage. Clearly, the changes at this level are student-centered. Integration as Level 5 refers to the teachers' collaboration with other teachers to modify the implementation according to their students' needs. At this stage, the teachers' actions expand out of their classroom and influence other domains affected by the innovation. At Renewal as a last Level, the teacher feels the need to make a foremost transformation in the innovation and searches for alternative applications (Anderson, 1997).

In conclusion, the levels of use model offers a powerful framework to explore the complexity of teachers' actual use of the curriculum together with the fidelity and mutual adaptation approaches proposed by Fullan and Pomfret (1977). Thus, this study aims to answer the following research question:

"How do public primary school EFL teachers implement the curriculum designed for the second and third grades with action-oriented approach"

3. Method

3.1 Research Design

This study was placed within a qualitative paradigm with a case study approach. Specifically, the study adopted an 'Exploratory' Case Study design mainly because it explores situations in which the intervention being evaluated has no clear, single set of outcomes (Yin, 2003).

In addition, a multi-case study approach (Creswell, 2013) was used to address the research question comprehensively.

3.2 Participants

Four EFL teachers working at four different public primary schools in Sakarya province in Turkey were the participants of the study. Purposeful sampling strategy (Creswell, 2013) was employed and the selection criteria for the participants were,

1. Volunteering to participate in the study and agreeing to have the researcher in their classroom as an observer,

2. Working at a public primary school since 2013, and

3. Experience in teaching English at second and third grades. All the participants were given pseudonyms. Table 1 reports the demographic information about the participants.

3.3 Setting

All the schools that the participants worked, offered diverse conditions and facilities. Mete's school was located in a district surrounded by families with lower-level income. The school functions part-time, in that it served as secondary school in the morning and as primary school in the afternoon. Approximate number of students was above thirty in third grades and less than twenty in second grades.

Likewise, Ayla's school was also located in a district of families with lower-income; besides, the number of students with family problems was quite high, and the number of divorced parents was also above average. Her school functions part-time as well, but serves only as primary school. Approximate number of students was about thirty in both second and third grades. Each classroom was equipped with a projector, but there was

no computer. Teachers need to use their personal computers during instruction.

Nur was the only teacher with her own English classroom. The pupils came to that classroom for English lessons. The classroom was equipped with a computer and projector, also the wall of the classroom was filled with subject-specific posters and visuals like 'weather', and 'transportation'. The number of students was almost thirty in all classes. Contrary to the schools above, this school was located in a district that had a high number of families whose economic-status was above average. In addition, parents donate to the school and the school was selected as one of the best schools of Turkey by Mone based on its quality and physical facilities. Lastly, this school also functions part-time and serves only as primary school.

Duru's school was located in a district where the economic status of families is either average or just above the average. The school's physical facilities were fine, the classrooms were equipped with projectors, but there was no computer and average number of students was above twenty for the second grade. Lastly, the school functions full-time and only serves as a primary school.

3.4 Instruments and Data Collection Procedures

As part of the nature of case study design, multiple sources of data were used involving observation, follow-up interview and document analysis. To start with observation, each teacher was observed in three lessons in either second or third grade. Of all the twelve lessons observed, seven were in third grade and five were in second grade. Secondly, a follow-up interview was conducted after observing each teacher for three lessons. Interview questions focused on the teachers' practices in the classroom. As for document analysis, all the teachers shared with the researchers, the materials they used during the lessons observed. Besides, a series of supplementary documents like students' notebooks, quiz papers and worksheets were also included in the analysis.

3.5 Data Analysis

As stated by Creswell (2013), within-case and cross-case analysis procedures were performed respectively to

Participant	Gender	Age	Education	Total experience	Experience in young learners
Mete	Male	39	Ba[1] from FLT[2]	11 years	6 years
Nur	Female	35	BA from ELT[3]	12 years	6 years
Duru	Female	33	BA from ELT	10 years	10 years
Ayla	Female	35	BA from ELT & Ma[4] from EP[5]	10 years	More than 2 years

Note: 1. BA: Bachelor of Arts 2. FLT: French Language Teaching 3. ELT: English Language Teaching 4. MA: Master of Arts 5. EP: Educational Psychology

Table 1. Demographics of the Participants

interpret the case under study. For within-case analysis, each teacher was treated as a comprehensive case, the codes and categories emerged from the meaning constructed through the data. The frequencies for each code on an individual basis were counted. After coding

Item	Codes and categories	Mete	Nur	Duru	Ayla	Total	%
	Teacher Curricular Knowledge						
1	Topic centered language usage and lexis	1	1	1	1	4	100
2	Use of headlines	1	1	1	1	4	100
3	Moving between and among units	1	1	1	1	4	100
4	Using L1 for explanation	1	1	1	1	4	100
5	Using L1 in a pinch	-	1	1	1	3	75
6	Encountering materials previously covered	1	1	1	1	4	100
7	Introducing very limited reading	1	1	-	1	3	75
8	Introducing very limited writing	-	1	1	1	3	75
9	Implicit error correction	-	-	1	-	1	25
	Limited Curricular Knowledge						
10	Availability of students' note books	1	1	1	1	4	100
11	Knowledge based culture presentation	1	1	-	-	2	50
12	Immediate error correction	1	-	-	-	1	25
13	Writing instruction above the proficiency	1	1	1	-	3	75
14	Explicit error correction	1	-	-	-	1	25
	Limited Subject Matter Knowledge						
15	Teaching vocabulary via L1 equivalents	1	1	1	-	3	75
16	Using translation for instruction	1	1	-	-	2	50
17	Based pronunciation instruction	1	-	-	-	1	25
18	Using translation for clarification	1	-	-	-	1	25
19	Misuse of communicative functions	1	1	-	-	2	50
	Qualified Subject Matter Knowledge						
20	Learning by doing	-	-	1	1	2	50
21	Visualized vocabulary instruction	-	1	1	1	3	75
22	Learning by experience	-	-	1	-	1	25
23	Ownership of language	-	-	1	-	1	25
24	Teaching vocabulary in context	-	1	-	1	2	50
25	Teaching grammar in context	-	-	-	1	1	25
26	Doing by showing for clarification	-	-	1	-	1	25
27	Addressing affective factors	1	-	1	1	3	75
28	Instant adjustments	-	-	1	1	2	50
	Knowledge of Intended Audience						
29	Using body language	-	1	1	1	3	75
30	Using variety of instructional materials	-	1	1	1	3	75
31	Repetition	1	1	1	1	4	100
32	Going from familiar to unfamiliar	1	1	-	-	2	50
33	Positive reinforcement	1	1	1	1	4	100
34	Using cognates	1	-	-	-	1	25
35	Using games	1	-	1	1	3	75
36	Relax and enjoyable atmosphere	-	-	1	1	2	50
37	Instrumental motivation	1	-	1	1	3	75

Table 2. Frequencies for Theme 1 Knowledge Base for Language Teaching

data individually, cross-case analysis was performed. In so doing, Constant Comparative Method (Glaser & Straus, 1967) was used to compare and contrast both the similarities and differences across the four participating teachers. The cross-case analysis provided the themes conceptualizing the data from all the cases; therefore, naturalistic generalizations were made illustrating all cases in detail. To achieve the inter-rater reliability, the data was first coded according to the principles explained above. Then, the second researcher cross-checked the data with the codes obtained by the first researcher.

4. Results

A total of sixty-seven codes emerged under nine categories. Of all the nine categories, five were grouped under Knowledge-Base for Language Teaching theme and four were grouped under Language Teaching Practices and Capabilities.

4.1 Theme 1. Knowledge-Base for Language Teaching

Knowledge-base for language teaching refers to the teacher's level of understanding to teach the language, and five categories were formed under this theme, three of which indicate competent knowledge of the teachers while, two of them indicate incompetent knowledge for language teaching (Table 2).

With respect to curricular knowledge, teachers illustrated differing behaviors, so Teacher Curricular Knowledge reflects the teacher's available knowledge about the curriculum implemented in second and third grade classes. Nevertheless, Limited Curricular Knowledge reports the teachers' insufficient knowledge about the implementation of the same curriculum.

To illustrate, teachers' error correction practices indicate their qualified and limited curricular knowledge. Firstly, implicit error correction is exemplified by Duru. Below is sample dialogue between Duru and her pupil:

Duru: Three what?

The pupil: Orange.

Duru: Oranges, yes draw the oranges.

However, Mete indicated both explicit and immediate error correction in his instruction. For instance, he asked

the students to make a sentence for the word orange as an exercise, one student said "There are two orange", then he immediately corrected the error by saying that "oranges, there is –s at the end of it".

As for teacher curricular knowledge, all the teachers illustrated moving between and among units yet in different manners. Mete reminded the numbers via L1 equivalents in a listening exercise. Nur delivered a handout with multiple-choice tests to revise the previous units of the second term. Duru required the pupils to count the fruits encountered in the exercise to remind them the numbers that they learnt previously. Ayla revised 'where?' question form by using the toys.

Lastly, knowledge-based culture presentation demonstrates limited curricular knowledge; so two teachers introduced cultural diversity in their lessons by only giving information about the target and world culture in L1. For example, Mete lectured in Turkish that London and Paris are capital cities of England and France because those cities came up in the listening exercise during the lesson. In Nur's lesson, target culture and world culture were addressed via words encountered: 'sightseeing bus – American school bus – Jeepney'. She explained where those transportation vehicles were used and for what reason in L1 to the pupils. She said that she explained these words because they were covered in the coursebook.

Concerning subject-matter knowledge, all the teachers presented behaviors indicating not only their professionalism in their area but also their inefficacy at some points. Thus, Limited Subject Matter Knowledge refers to the teachers' insufficient knowledge about teaching language whereas Qualified Subject Matter Knowledge means the teachers' professional knowledge on teaching language.

In terms of vocabulary instruction, teachers with limited subject-matter knowledge teach vocabulary via L1 equivalents, whereas those with qualified knowledge use techniques of visualized vocabulary instruction and teaching vocabulary in context. To illustrate, to teach the vocabulary for animals, Mete required his students to draw the pictures of the animals, and then wrote their names under these pictures together with L1 equivalents in parenthesis. In Nur's class, the pupils watched a video about the question-answer forms on weather first, and then the words about weather were repeated with their L1 equivalents in the software. However, Nur also benefitted from the visuals and contextual explanations for vocabulary instruction. She drew the pictures for the weather-related words such as rainy and sunny. She drew an umbrella and asked the pupils how the weather is. In addition, she made simple explanations such as "I can't see" to receive the answer 'foggy' or she said "I'm playing snowball, how is the weather?" to receive the answer 'snowy'.

Teachers' elicitation techniques exemplify their subject-matter knowledge, so using translation for clarification illustrated limited subject-matter knowledge, whereas doing by showing refers to the latter. Specifically, only Mete always used translation to clarify what to do in the exercises used during the lesson. In contrast, Duru preferred to show the students what to do by doing herself. She required the students to match the numbers with the fruits and she took a pencil, and presented the matching behavior by showing the pupils how to do the exercise contrary to Mete.

Learning by doing and learning by experience illustrate teachers' qualified knowledge as well, so Ayla required her pupils to come and draw the pictures of the toys whose L2 forms were written on the board. For learning by experience, Duru instructed structures such as 'cut the peaches, smell the melon and eat the grapes'. She required the pupils to act as if they were eating, smelling or cutting the fruits shown in her flashcards. She said "this exercise might be practiced in a short time if I used the matching exercise suggested in the coursebook, but I wanted the pupils to come to the board and learn the structures by using them".

Knowledge of Intended Audience as the last category refers to the teachers' practices considering the age group of the learners that they teach. Firstly, using a variety of instructional materials indicated teachers' qualified knowledge on their pupils' way of learning and interests. For example, Ayla entered the classroom with her hands

Item	Codes and categories	Mete	Nur	Duru	Ayla	Total	%
	Addressing Communicative Skills						
38	Creation of real meaning	1	1	-	1	3	75
39	Meaningful use of language	1	1	1	1	4	100
40	Contextualized language use	-	-	-	1	1	25
41	Using L2 for communication	1	1	-	1	2	50
42	Using L1 for communication	-	^	-	1	1	25
43	L1-centered classroom language	1	1	-	1	3	75
44	L2-centered classroom language	-	1	1	1	3	75
45	Addressing expressive language practice	1	1	1	1	3	75
	Means of Evaluating Learning Outcomes						
46	Use of tests	1	1	-	-	2	50
47	L1-centered vocabulary assessment	1	1	-	-	2	50
48	Memorization	1	1	-	-	2	50
49	Scope of homework	1	1	1	1	4	100
	Scope of Language Usage						
50	Addressing receptive language practice	1	1	-	1	3	75
51	Productive control of vocabulary	1	1	1	1	4	100
52	Receptive control of vocabulary	-	1	1	1	3	75
53	Addressing receptive language skills	1	-	1	1	3	75
54	Peer interaction	-	-	-	1	1	25
55	Addressing productive language skills	1	-	-	1	2	50
	Instructional Practices						
56	Use of inductive/deductive strategies	1	1	-	-	2	50
57	Explicit grammar instruction	1	1	-	-	2	50
58	Implicit grammar instruction	-	-	1	1	2	50
59	Translation-based skills praxis	1	-	1	-	2	50
60	Exercise-focused skills practice	-	1	-	1	2	50
61	Skills-practicum contextualized in L1	1	1	-	-	2	50
62	Using L1 for medium of instruction	1	1	-	-	2	50
63	Course book bounded instruction	1	-	1	-	2	50
64	Teaching beyond the course book	-	1	1	-	2	50
65	Addressing pronunciation	-	1	1	-	2	50
66	Learning in chorus	1	1	-	-	2	50
67	Exam-focused instruction	-	1	-	1	2	50

Table 3. Frequencies for Theme 2 Language Teaching Practices and Capabilities

full of toys; she supported her instruction by means of toys, puppets, posters, flashcards, hand-outs, songs and videos in all the lessons observed. Besides, Duru used materials such as videos, songs, flashcards and cartoons. Of all the teachers, only Nur had a specific classroom of her own, so she had lots of posters and visual materials on the walls of the classroom. She instructed her lessons using different exercises in the software including videos, a cartoon, etc.

Additionally, teachers demonstrated their knowledge of instrumental motivation by encouraging their pupils'

participation in the lesson, in that the teachers struggled to increase their pupils' desire to obtain something practical or concrete in response to actively participate in the exercises during the lesson. Duru told her students to choose a 'star student' at the end of the lesson and showed a certificate, naming the person who is awarded as a star for behaving appropriately during the lesson. Ayla gave smiling faces to well-mannered students during the lesson.

4.2 Theme 2. Language Teaching Practices and Capabilities

Language teaching practices and capabilities are basically concerned with the teachers' instructional practices and their competence in employing those practices. Four main categories were formed: addressing communicative skills, means of evaluating learning outcomes, instructional practices and scope of language usage.

Eight codes were grouped under Addressing Communicative Skills. Firstly, classroom language refers to the teachers' use of language for instructional purposes; it is their preference of a language to interact with the students or to give the instructions. As is seen in Table 3, Mete preferred only L1 for classroom language, whereas Ayla preferred only L2. For example, Mete instructed the pupils to open page 'one-hundred-and-twenty-four' by saying first L2 then L1 version. He said "we learnt to count until one hundred, so I told L1 equivalent of the page." In contrast, Ayla showed the book page and said 'one-hundred-and-ten', one pupil of her said the L1 equivalent of the page on his own and she confirmed the student by saying "yes" only. Nur and Duru preferred to use both of the languages depending on the situation. Nur preferred L1 more than L2, yet Duru preferred the opposite.

Three teachers addressed expressive language practice except for Nur who mainly used a high number of multiple-choice tests and exercises. Firstly, Ayla started her lessons with Teddy and used it to ask and answer questions such as 'How are you?, Are you happy?'. Besides, Duru required her pupils to come to the board and form and sing their own song by using the flashcards pasted on the board. However, Mete's lesson was centered on question-answer

exercises in the second grade. He asked the pupils to ask him if he likes bananas in L1, the pupil formed the question and said 'Do you like bananas?' or he asked a similar question and pupils answered.

Concerning Means of Evaluating Learning Outcomes, four codes were formed, two of which were memorization and scope of homework. Firstly, two teachers indicated the use of memorization as a technique for evaluation. Mete dictated question forms on transportation and required his pupils to memorize those forms[1]. Nur required her students to write the words she delivered as handout for five-times. Secondly, all the teachers gave homework at the end of their lessons. Mete asked his students to write three questions about the weather of three different cities and to answer these questions one by one with a different weather descriptor. Nur delivered a multiple-choice test exercise as homework and, Duru asked her pupils to complete the fruit basket that they did during the lesson as a kind of hands-on activity and she wanted her students to review the fruits that they learnt in that lesson. Lastly, Ayla assigned her students to write the words about transportation they learnt three-times and put them into their word-box.

Scope of Language Usage included six codes, two of which addressed vocabulary instruction practices of the teachers. All the teachers illustrated productive control of vocabulary, but in different manners. Mete started his lesson by requiring the pupils to tell him the fruits in L2 altogether and he wrote them on the board, whereas Duru started the same subject by showing flashcards of the fruits and asking what they were in L2. Volunteer students said L2 forms of the fruits shown. On the contrary, Duru did not write anything on the board, instead she pasted the flashcards of the fruits after the pupil said what it was.

Both Nur and Ayla delivered handouts to address receptive control of vocabulary but their approach varied. Nur required her pupils to match the pictures with the weather-words as an exercise, yet Ayla instructed the pupils to color the pictures in their handout by showing the toys available in the classroom and, telling what color to use like 'blue bus'. Students listened to the teacher and colored appropriately. As for the receptive language skills, Duru and Ayla provided music to their students while they were busy with exercises or taking note to their notebooks. However, Mete had a song exercise introduced in the book, he wrote the rhymes of the song on the board and required the pupils to follow the words of the song from the board while they were listening.

Instructional Practices as the last category notes the teachers' observed behaviors to teach the language, and twelve codes were formed. To teach the grammar, Mete and Nur preferred explicit instruction, whereas Duru and Ayla preferred the opposite. Firstly, Mete dictated the pupils to write the list of personal pronouns with their L1 equivalents into their notebooks. Nur covered present continuous tense by giving examples from Turkish, and she emphasized the auxiliary verbs and explained how to use them in L1. She also emphasized how to use in Turkish. In terms of implicit grammar instruction, Duru showed the flashcards of the fruits, asked what they are to the pupils, and then she required them to repeat altogether, first the singular, then the plural form of the word like 'lemon – lemons'. Ayla required one pupil to come to the board and draw the bike as an exercise for vocabulary. While the girl was drawing the bike, she said "she is drawing a bike" by using rising intonation for 'is drawing' and 'a bike'.

Finally, exam-focused instruction was observed in two teachers. Nur was the only teacher using multiple-choice tests during the lesson and she also delivered hand-outs including multiple-choice tests as homework. She said "because classroom teachers in our school care about the school success in those tests. The children take okulistik[®2] (school and statistics) examinations. English is evaluated via tests in state examinations. Therefore, I want children to get used to the tests". Ayla assigned the pupils to write the words they learnt three times at home and her rationale was the evaluation of writing as a skill in the

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Note 1. It was observed as a note written in a student notebook as 'memorize'.

Note 2. It is a learning platform eligible from the internet, addressing primary and secondary education only. Students, their parents, teachers and school managers can benefit from the program. It has five main subject areas as Turkish, Maths, Science and Technology, Social Sciences and English.
It includes interactive instruction, worksheets, and videos on how to solve the questions, subject-matter tests, educational games and e-books.
The concepts are claimed to be prepared according to the constructivist teaching model.
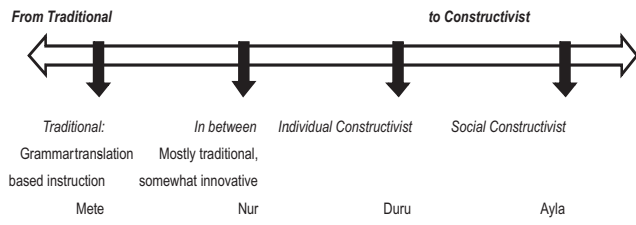
Figure 1. Continuum of Instruction

examinations conducted by private institutions.

5. Discussion

All the teachers who participated in this study illustrated implementation of the curriculum in different manners. Therefore, this study indicated a continuum of instruction ranging between traditional and social constructivist as shown in Figure 1.

Broadly speaking, Mete's instruction indicated traditional and teacher-centered practices including use of whole class activities, using translation for instruction and clarification, knowledge-based culture presentation, explicit grammar instruction, etc. Thus, his role as a teacher can be regarded as transmitter of knowledge. Additionally, a considerable mismatch between the curricular principles and Mete's instruction was observed; for instance, although the curriculum specifically cautioned against presenting the lyrics of the songs as a reading material (MoNE, 2013), he wrote the lyrics of the song into the board and required the pupils to listen to the song by reading the lyrics from the board and write the song into their notebooks if they want.

Wang and Cheng (2009) claimed grammar-translation method and English proficiency as negative predictors of curriculum implementation. These two factors might cause Mete's ineffective implementation of the curriculum as he mainly used translation to practice language skills and taught grammar explicitly (Table 3); also he was a graduate of FLT which might influence his English proficiency in a negative manner. Defined in this way, Mete presented 'MECHANICAL' use of the curriculum addressing teacher-centered practices in the implementation (Anderson, 1997).

Second teacher, Nur illustrated mainly traditional practices, yet she exemplified some innovative ways of instruction as well, placing her between traditional and constructivist. To give an example, she use translation rather often and L1 was the medium of instruction in her lessons due mainly to the software she used; besides, the form of the activities, pupils practiced were either whole-class or individual which were the indicators of traditional instruction. Lastly, her instruction was centered on tests, so the pupils did not have any chance to use the target language; they mostly solved the tests either in the software or delivered as handout. Even so, the way she presented vocabulary was innovative, since she used visuals by drawing pictures or by posters to teach the vocabulary, she also taught the vocabulary in context. Seen in this light, Nur presented 'ROUTINE' use of the curriculum since she made few modifications and adaptations on the implementation (Anderson, 1997).

In this regard, Orafi (2013) claimed that the examination system as one of the factors causing a mismatch between the curriculum's intentions and actual classroom practices of the teachers. Accordingly, Nur's lessons presented a clear discrepancy between what the curriculum intends and what she practices since she illustrated exam-focused instruction; she was mainly concerned with the tests conducted either school-wide or countrywide. More specifically, standardized exam pressure might have caused her instruction to be more transmissive-oriented.

Duru and Ayla created both humanistic and constructivist learning environments. In particular, relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere was clearly observed in both classes. These teachers had proficient knowledge of the curriculum and presented competent use of it. Their instruction centered on learning by doing and learning by experience indicating constructivist features. Lastly, both of them exemplified instant adjustments during instruction as an evidence for their competency in subject-matter knowledge. From this perspective, they illustrated 'REFINEMENT' use of the curriculum, since their practices exemplified some modifications on the proposed actions in the curriculum (Anderson, 1997).

According to social constructivism originating from Vygotsky, teaching and learning are defined as a social activity in nature. Notably, social interaction among

students, and students and the teacher are emphasized in this perspective. Even if the pupils were active during the lesson in Duru's classes, there was no peer interaction. The interaction with the teacher was also limited, and mostly the teacher required a certain pupil to do something and that pupil performed what was required. In slight contrast, peer interaction was observed in Ayla's lessons, and she interacted with the pupils during the lesson, at least she performed 'give me five' with each pupil. From this perspective, Duru fostered individual constructivism, yet Ayla encouraged social constructivism.

Quite the reverse, Yıldız (2006) noted the difficulties in classroom management as one drawback of constructivist teaching. Similarly, the main problem in Ayla's lessons illustrating teaching suitable for social constructivist approach was the difficulty to control the class. In all her lessons, she used lots of toys as instructional materials that helped the pupils to pay full attention to the lesson; yet, they also caused difficulty for the teacher to control the actions of the students, since they were trying to play with the toys during the lesson. Arguably, extensive interaction observed in Ayla's classroom as a social constructivist learning environment might be the reason for the difficulties in classroom management.

Notably, research indicated that some factors such as the type of school and the socio-economic status of the kids influence the classroom practices (Yanık, 2007). Therefore, although it makes sense that using L1 supports students understanding if L2 proficiency is very low mainly due to the language learning environment, contrary examples were observed in this study. In other words, this study revealed variety in implementation and teacher factor was the foremost rationale for the variance mainly because Ayla indicated constructivist way of instruction in a school located in lower-economic status region and pupils with family problems, yet Nur presented more traditional way of instruction, even if her school was equipped with lots of facilities including specific English classroom and more educated parent profiles. Besides, Ayla preferred using L2 during her instruction and she preferred L2 even when she interacted with her pupils, whereas Nur mostly preferred using L1 during her instruction.

In particular, lack of instructional materials was noted as a common factor hindering the effective implementation of the curriculum (Donmez, 2010; Kırkgoz, 2008b; Topkaya & Kucuk, 2010; Yanık, 2007). In a similar fashion, this study indicated positive impact of using variety of instructional materials such as audio-visuals, instructional software, hands-on activities and games during instruction. Even so, the study also pointed to the impact of teacher's understanding on the design of activities practiced during instruction. That is, even if Nur had her own classroom with lots of posters and visuals on the walls and used instructional software during instruction, her main emphasis on using tests caused ineffective implementation of the curriculum. Moreover, Mete illustrated use of games as a variety; it was not in a form of game rather in a form of competition to guess the L1 or L2 equivalents of the words posed by the teacher. By contrast, Ayla entered the classroom with her arms full of materials including toys, speakers, personal laptop, puppets, handouts, etc., in that she supplied her materials on her own. In a similar perspective, research revealed that even if some teachers have better resources, they might not perform better than those of others with more scarce resources for various reasons such as poor method of teaching and inability of teachers to use instructional materials (Arum, 2015; Ghanney, 2008).

Conclusion

This study aimed to explore the primary school EFL teachers' use of the curriculum innovation designed for the second and third grades. Findings mainly suggested a considerable variation in implementation ranging from traditional to constructivist. Although factors such as presence of instructional materials and facilities of school influenced the level of execution, the study clearly indicated the teacher as the main factor in effective implementation of any imposed change. Moreover, the findings signified the positive impact of subject-matter knowledge and curricular knowledge to achieve coherence between the intended and the implemented curriculum.

However, this study revealed a clear limitation for the

scope of theoretical framework adopted; that is, levels of use as a framework (Hord et al., 1987) accepts somewhat linear developmental process in teachers' implementation of an innovation; yet this study indicated complex behaviors of teachers in implementing a proposed change. For example, Nur illustrated exam-focused instruction causing her to be more transmissive and teacher-centered; however, she explained the rationale as the class teachers' and school principal's emphasis on the achievement scores on the test examinations. This situation indicated the fifth level of the framework 'INTEGRATION' which means teachers' collaboration with other teachers to modify the implementation according to their students' needs (Anderson, 1997). Even, the modification referred here implies a direction towards the teacher's proficiency in the implementation of intended curriculum, yet even if Nur indicated an experience of collaboration with other teachers, this collaboration caused her instruction to illustrate discrepancy between the intended and implemented curriculum.

Extending from this perspective, this study is limited to the understanding of the framework developed by Hord et al. (1987), so future research exploring teachers' curriculum implementation may well organize a framework by blending multiple theories and approaches to understand the issue deeply. In addition, questions remain about the linkages between the attitudes and behaviors of the teachers concerning the implementation of an innovation, so an important next step may be to take account two dimensions of CBAM as stages of concern and levels of use (Hord et. al., 1987) to discover teachers' behaviors together with their perceptions regarding the curriculum implementation.

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